

because of the pale plumage. The bird did not sing much and had the light eye colour described by Bullough (1942) for normal females. That it was a female was confirmed the following year when mated to a normal male and copulation took place. In June 1960 the bird began to moult, the new feathers being quite deep brown and ultimately the whole bird became this deeper colour. There was, however, no sign of any black pigment. In this plumage the breast spots were more conspicuous. On 8th April 1961 a second fawn Starling in faded plumage, appearing identical with the original bird when first observed, was seen about three-quarters of a mile from Glanton, in company with normal birds. Both fawn Starlings appeared strong and healthy.

### SUMMARY

Hereditary and non-hereditary abnormal plumage is described. The feathers of the two types of plumage may be indistinguishable.

A pale mutant Blue Tit, lacking melanin in the plumage, was shown to be both a white and a yellow, not an albino or a lutino. The bird showed clearly how the species combines the two hereditary characteristics of white and yellow ground.

Hereditary yellow superimposed on non-hereditary white in the Greenfinch is described. An apparently similar case in the Rock Pipit is discussed. In contrast non-hereditary white and hereditary white in a non-carotenoid species, *Columba livia*, is described.

Fawn and cinnamon mutations are briefly discussed and two fawn Starlings are described.

A valuable distinction between normal and abnormal plumage is whether or not there is dark pigment at the base of the feather. In abnormal plumage, both hereditary and non-hereditary, there is usually none, whilst in normal plumage there is very frequently pigment, often heavy, at the base of the feather.

### References:

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## An Aberrant Specimen of *Lybius undatus leucogenys*

Blundell and Lovat

by MELVIN A. TRAYLOR

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Among the specimens of *Lybius undatus leucogenys* in Chicago Natural History Museum is a male from Sisha, Sidamo Province, Abyssinia, that differs from any other that I have seen or found described. All those areas that in normal birds are yellow, the wash on the belly, the edgings of rectrices and remiges and the tips of the rump feathers and upper tail-coverts, are in this male, bright orange.

Macdonald (1938, *Ibis*: 348) has discussed variation in *undatus*. He points out that *leucogenys* was described from a variant in which the throat is white, irregularly tipped with yellow or red, instead of glossy

black. While white-throated birds are most common in the west of Abyssinia, they crop up elsewhere in the south and south-west, and he considers the white throat more an individual than a geographic variant. The present specimen is intermediate in this respect, having a few white feathers on the throat, two of which are tipped with red. Macdonald also describes a melanistic mutant in which the head is normal but the body is brownish black except for thin yellow edging on some of the inner secondaries.

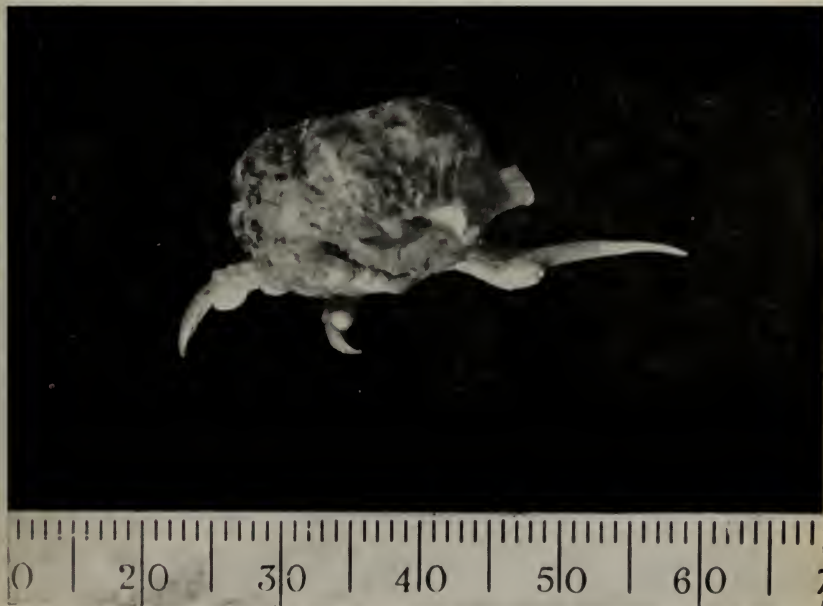
Although the orange-washed specimen appears to be a mutant, I hesitate to call it that because it appears to be moulting into this aberrant plumage from a normal one. The body plumage is fresh and the wings and tail are just completing moult. The second and third secondaries on each wing, however, are still of the previous plumage and they have yellow edgings as in normally plumaged birds. Considering the known variability of the species, this could be a mutant in which the aberrant characters do not appear until the adult plumage. On the other hand, the change in colour may be due to some abnormal element in the diet which enriched the yellow pigments, and not have any genetic basis.

### A benign tumour of the foot of a Crested Lark

by JAMES M. HARRISON AND HAIM HOVEL

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On 14th October, 1959, one of us (H.H.) shot a Crested Lark, *Galerida cristata altirostris* Brehm at Beersheba; the bird was frequenting the rubbish tip. On examining it a large tumour was found involving all the toes of its left foot (Fig. 1). The bird was in good general condition and



Simple Chondroma of Crested Lark's foot